

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting
July 19-20, 2001
Clemson University

Thursday, July 19, 2001

Members Present: Mr. Barnet, Mr. Daniel, Dr. Everson, Senator Fair, Senator Giese, Dr. Gummerson, Rep. Harrell, Mrs. Hoag, Mrs. Marlowe, Mr. Martin, Senator Matthews, Mr. McTeer, Mr. Staton, Supt. Tenenbaum, Mrs. Thompson, Rep. Townsend, Mr. Wilson

Welcome and Introductions: Mr. Barnet welcomed members and the press to the meeting. He introduced Mrs. Susan Marlowe, a new EOC member. He acknowledged Mr. Staton's retirement from Colonial Life and his receipt of the Order of the Palmetto from Governor Hodges.

Minutes of June 21, 2001: The minutes of the June 21 meeting were approved as distributed.

Subcommittee Reports: Each Subcommittee Chairperson presented an overview of the Subcommittee's work during 2000-2001. During the discussions emphasis was placed on requiring and providing more evidence to support decisions. Supt. Tenenbaum suggested that a small group develop common recommendations prior to the public presentations of budget requests. There was considerable discussion of funding issues and the need to build support at local levels for the 2010 goal, emphasizing its relationship to individual economic benefit. The members supported a meeting with legislators to brief them on report card issues prior to their release. A date between August 13 and September 7 was proposed.

Long-range Plan: Dr. Anderson presented an overview of the long-range plan. Members focused on the need to engage all South Carolinians in support of the goal and to emphasize local commitment and individual benefit. To gain public support for greater investments in education, members suggested that educators and advocates must demonstrate accomplishments. There were general expressions that the educational system must demonstrate improvement before we can expect taxpayers to support increases in millage or taxes. The EOC requested information on nations with high poverty that are moving ahead in educational results and the impact of parental involvement.

Superintendents' Panel: Mr. Charles Gadsden, Superintendent of Georgetown County Schools, addressed the EOC. He explained how his district is restructuring to meet the 2010 goal. These include reassigning some responsibilities, providing more detailed information for teachers, parents and students on how to meet the standards and extending learning time. The district has consolidated several schools and built new facilities.

Mr. Ray Geddings, Superintendent of Lexington School District Three, presented information on the 2010 goals. He expressed confidence in the state's ability to achieve significant gains on most of the evaluation measures but had concerns about some measures. He suggested that the nine areas for action were "on target" and emphasized changes in governance, funding, teacher supply and adult education.

Dr. William Harner, Superintendent of Greenville County Schools, presented materials about the district's effort to be first in the Southeast by 2005. He detailed instructional programs and

initiatives. He also discussed some funding challenges and referenced a letter to the General Assembly from Herman Gaither.

The EOC recessed for dinner and the evening at 6:00 p.m.

Friday, July 20, 2001

Members Present: Mr. Barnet, Mr. Daniel, Dr. Everson, Senator Giese, Dr. Gummerson, Rep. Harrell, Mrs. Hoag, Mrs. Marlowe, Mr. Martin, Senator Matthews, Mr. McTeer, Mr. Staton, Supt. Tenenbaum, Mrs. Thompson, Rep. Townsend, Mr. Wilson

Executive Session: The EOC went into Executive Session to discuss a contractual matter.

Open Session

EOC Structure: The EOC discussed the need for the 2002 appointments to increase racial/ethnic and geographic diversity among the committee membership. Alex Martin was elected vice-chairman by acclamation. Mr. Wilson was appointed as the EOC ex-officio member to the board of the Governor's Schools for the Arts and Humanities.

Contractual Matter: The EOC approved a three-year extension of Dr. Anderson's contract with a market adjustment to her compensation.

Meeting Locations: Plans for the EOC to meet in school districts were discussed.

Task Force on Workforce Development: Mr. McTeer questioned the alignment between the accountability system and emerging recommendations from the Task Force on Workforce Development. Supt. Tenenbaum described the general recommendations. Dr. Anderson indicated that the EOC staff is obtaining copies of Workkeys, a student workforce assessment, for study. Concerns and endorsements were expressed about the employability diploma. Senator Matthews asked that the new initiatives be coordinated so that the state's focus on high levels of achievement is clear.

Long-range Plan: The interrelationship among the initiatives was discussed. Mr. Wilson suggested that the extension of teacher contracts be phased in, with first priority to schools rated unsatisfactory, then below average, etc. Supt. Tenenbaum expressed confidence in the teacher specialist programs. There was discussion about district organization and consolidation, local fiscal effort, teacher compensation as it relates to supply, and fiscal authority. Mr. Daniel and others emphasized the need to examine consolidation of districts but to provide evidence to support any recommendations. The EOC considered a motion to adopt the plan as a working document. Adoption should not be interpreted as approval of any particular recommendation. The staff is asked to examine district organization and changes to either structure or funding necessary to achieve our goals. Senator Matthews expressed his belief that the EOC must make the difficult decisions, addressing the needs of the entire state. Providing incentives for district consolidations was mentioned as a strategy. Members agreed that the implementation of the EAA needs to remain the first priority. The plan is to be used to identify points of concern, research alternatives, resolve differences and build a base of support.

A roll call was held on the motion to adopt the plan as a working document. Senator Fair and Mr. Smith were absent, Rep. Townsend abstained, and other members voted approval.

Local Leadership Quality Recommendations

Dr. Anderson reviewed the recommendations, the draft legislation and questions regarding the drafts. The EOC discussed the recommendations, asked that the drafts be changed to reflect their concerns.

The EOC asked the staff to examine consolidation, determining economies of scale, geographic considerations and synergies that could be achieved to improve the results.

2001-2002 Objectives

The EOC reviewed the 2000-2001 objectives and recommended changes to reflect broader legislative support of the accountability initiatives, studies of school district size and cooperation, local effort and tax-paying ability, advancement of the governance proposals, development of broad supports for education, and the P-16 concept. The objectives are to be revised and presented at the August meeting.

Rep. Harrell asked that task forces present their recommendations to the EOC so that we have a coordinated improvement effort. Others mentioned the need for incentives to involve higher education institutions.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.